



# MARION COUNTY PARKS COMMISSION

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING

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**March 13, 2018, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**

**North Santiam Room at 5155 Silverton Road NE, Salem, Oregon**

**Members Present:** Sandy Grulkey, Wayne Rawlins, Ben Williams, Kyleen Zimmer

**Members Absent:** Marty Heyen, Ryan Mann

**Staff Present:** Russ Dilley, Brian May, Jolene Bray

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### **ADMINISTRATIVE (Information/Discussion/Action)**

**Call to Order: 10:00 a.m.**

#### **Approval of January 9, 2018 Meeting Minutes**

Wayne made a motion to approve the January 9, 2018, meeting minutes. Kyleen seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

#### **Public Input**

None.

#### **Commission Member Announcements and Upcoming Events**

None.

### **COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

#### **Presentations on Spong's Landing**

Ben reported on the following about Spong's Landing Park:

- Entrance gate: Gate needs to be repaired because one side is only supported by a chain on the post and is starting to sag.
- Facilities: Play area is in great shape and pavilions are also in good shape.
- Off season use: There is a lot of off season use and there were some people in the park who had biked out from Keizer. The park has a well beaten down pathway to the north of the beach that passes the property stakes onto the neighbor's property, and there are other trails through the north and east side to the river. There was discussion about fencing and keeping the park open year round. Brian said with additional staffing this is a possibility for the future. Ben said he saw no graffiti and no trash during his visit.
- Trail maintenance: A trail parallel to the river has turned into a small drainage channel that may erode the bank.
- Sign proposal: Ben suggested a new park sign using the historical wording about how Spong's became a county park that is found on the park's web page.
- South side: Ben said he didn't walk through the south section but a trail system would be nice. Russ said there is a trail that goes to the river through the woods. Kyleen asked about terrain in this section. Russ said there is a lot of undergrowth, poison oak, and some manmade trails.
- Road maintenance: Road looks great but a lot of pine cones have dropped onto road, which could be hazardous to bicyclists. Russ said the lot will be striped before the park opens on May 1.

Sandy gave a report on Scotts Mills and Labish parks:

- Labish
  - Labish Village Park is one acre park.
  - Community contacts: Sandy met a neighbor of Labish Park whose child wants to volunteer to help the park. A lot of the neighborhood children go into Keizer to visit city parks. Sandy said the neighbors have a community meeting every month and the next meeting agenda is on a water well issue so may attend a future meeting.
  - Labish facilities: The new playground equipment doesn't have a swing. Neighbors would like a covered area and neighborhood children would like an area to their ride bikes. Russ said he ordered another picnic table and bench and they are being installed. Brian asked if it would be better to have more picnic tables or a BMX trail if that's the preferred use. Kyleen said the person who created the BMX trails at Rogers Wayside is a good source if we decide to develop BMX trails.
  - Parking: Mostly limited to parallel parking and that appears to be adequate.
  - Watering system: Park doesn't have one but Labish Water District services this area.
  - Adopt-a-Park: Sandy said she would like to find someone to adopt the park.
- Scotts Mills
  - Sandy is the liaison between Scotts Mills County Park, Scotts Mills City Council, and the Pudding River Watershed Council. She said she wants to find someone to adopt the park. While researching she found the water falls are historical significant to Native Americans because of black eel, which residents told here were killed by large numbers in the past. Sandy said this might be the Pacific Lamprey which had ceremonial use to the Grand Rhonde Tribe. She said the park was already a pioneer industrial heritage site because of the saw mill, but now has discovered it's also on a major Native American trail used by Mollala and visiting tribes. She said it could also be a heritage park and would make a good school field trip site.
  - Annual park: Sandy said the goal is to have a year-round park. Very well used and there are visitors there all the time.
  - Paving parking lot: Will be done May or later when the weather warms up. Brian said gate will be moved back several feet so cars can park in front of the gate when it is closed.
  - Crosswalk and signage: Russ said met with mayor and councilman about what is being done within the park and roadway. He said the county will put up road signs, and would like the city to create a pedestrian path down 5th Street with a crosswalk where it T's on Crooked Finger Road. Brian said in order to put in a crosswalk there will need to be a traffic study and the county doesn't have the funding for that, but can put up a crossing sign at that on Crooked Finger Road.
  - Improvements: Brian said in the future he would like to add additional picnic areas and pavilion.
  - Vegetation and drainage: Russ had someone brush cut the hillside and remove the cuttings so it didn't block drainage.
  - Grand Ronde Tribe: Sandy said she is having trouble connecting with the tribe about working together. Residents have said they will work together to make this happen.
  - Kyleen said this is a very nice park and asked about renaming it to Scotts Mills Falls Park, which may be more compelling in bringing in visitors. She said if parks are named after what they are, that descriptive naming may help pull in visitors.
  - Dam: Sandy reiterated that the dam should be removed because it's dangerous and the removal would allow salmon and lamprey to spawn in that area.

### **Denny Park Grant Opportunity**

Russ said two grants Land and water conservation fund and local govt grant. Going to apply for N. Fork and other for Denny. Did neighborhood survey and staff member queried neighbors. Russ said 34 neighbors gave answers to the survey. Three big asks for improvements were playground equipment, picnic tables, and restrooms. Russ said local govt grant would pay for restroom but nearby neighbors and sheriff's office were concerned about transient population using, especially since they couldn't be locked at night. Russ said not

applying for another grant but will budget county funds to pay for picnic area (3 tables and BBQ), irrigation, lighting, and Brian wants to add an ADA portapotty. Brian said proposing an East Salem Sheriffs District that would pay for deputies dedicated to that area.

## **BUDGET DISCUSSION**

### **Parks Staffing Levels**

Brian said last year the parks program had six seasonal maintenance workers but essentially lost two people because they became fee collectors for parking and camping fees on the North Fork corridor instead of doing maintenance work. He said this year he asked for six maintenance workers and two fee collectors, which will be paid for from fees collected. Brian said he is also asking for a full-time medium equipment operator, who will be responsible for maintaining the parks and will allow Russ to focus more on his work as parks coordinator. He said parks hired a temporary employee in February, which has freed Russ up so he is able to work on grants and other administrative issues. Brian said the total staffing request is 1 full-time medium equipment operator, 6 temporary maintenance workers, and 2 fee collectors. He said this is actually 4 FTE because most of the positions are temporary and the majority of the cost will come from county general fund. Brian said the initial budget presentation is in early April and the department will know after that if the board of commissioners will approve.

Wayne asked Ben if the commission should revisit their current meeting date/time to accommodate Commissioner Brentano's attendance. All agreed they would be willing to do that so Jolene will work with the board's office to identify potential meeting date/time alternatives and will email that information to commission members for a vote.

### **North Fork Improvements**

Russ said BLM did environmental assessment last year and said they could do a lot and told staff where they wanted a picnic area. Russ said they wanted another picnic area on county property but that would mean cutting down a lot of trees. He said they did a walk thru and there's an area where trees have burned down and it has a view of the river. BLM said they can put in a gravel pad with removal tables but in order to put in a shelter they would need to do NEPA and that is a yearlong process with any grant funding available in 2020. He said the county will have drawings, designs done and ready, and then can apply for grant.

He said Jerry David and John ? have a company that does site surveys for amenities (retired parks staff) and Minto for exceptional camping at Minto and to east side of Bear Creek to expand camping (maybe BLM lease). He said will also ask them to go into North Fork Park to do drawing of what that area to show what picnic would look like.

### **North Fork Corridor Updates**

Russ said there have been issues with fee collection on the North Fork corridor. He said the fee collection boxes are being redesigned and will hopefully be tamper-proof. Brian said they have learned a lot from 2017 and the long term strategy is to have a manned fee station for the entire corridor.

### **Auburn Park Update**

Brian said there has been a lot of interest in the six acre Auburn Park property that is adjacent to Auburn Elementary School. He said the park's value is estimated to be \$4 million, and the city doesn't have property that is worth that amount that also meets the county needs. Brian said the parks master plan talks about river access and there is possibly property near the Wheatland Ferry. He said the county recently discovered it has 17 acres within BLM's Fisherman's Bend Park and there is an opportunity to swap that for BLM land adjacent to Bear Creek Park, which will allow the county to expand camping. He said if the swap is possible it will still take years to complete. Brian asked if any commission members knew anyone who has worked on this type of issue and could be a resource. Kyleen said she was a realtor and would put the word out. Wayne said Oregon State

Parks also has land agents in a real estate department and Oregon Fish & Wildlife also have a group. He said those types of entities have real estate divisions who are always looking for land to acquire or dispense with.

Russ said staff recently discovered that the county took \$750 from Land and Water for Santana Park, which made it ineligible for donation to a non-profit. Wayne said they can fold that into whatever property the county acquires in exchange for the Auburn Park property.

## **FUTURE TOPICS / EMERGING ISSUES / OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Staff Updates**

- One temporary worker has returned already and her first priority is to get all restroom floors painted and then change out all risers.
- St. Louis Ponds Park opened on March 1.
- Russ showed commission members the new county parks rules sign. There is one version with the North Fork Corridor logo that will be used at North Fork parks and another version for all other county parks.
- A recruitment flyer has gone out for parks temporary hiring and will close on March 26.
- Found a camp host for Bear Creek and they will start in June.
- Minto Park stairs are being installed by the Juvenile Department. They had to pour three concrete landings to attach stringers to, and this will replace the route already used to the river.

### **Other Business**

Wayne said he really appreciates the amount of work staff does they are very appreciated.

### **Future Topics**

- Commissioner's Park Reports
- Budget Discussion

**ADJOURN:** 12:05 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING:** May 8, 2018, at 10:00 a.m. in the North Santiam Room (1<sup>st</sup> Floor) at Public Works.